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**NON-PROVISIONAL APPLICATION FOR LETTERS PATENT
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

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15 Be it known that I, Melanie Lowry, residing at 7129 Big Woods Drive, Woodstock, Georgia, 30189, a citizen of the United States, have invented certain new and useful improvements in a

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THIGH-SLIMMING GARMENT AND METHOD THEREOF

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of which the following is a specification.

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THIGH-SLIMMING GARMENT AND METHOD THEREOF**TECHNICAL FIELD**

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The present invention relates generally to shape enhancing clothing and, more specifically, to thigh-slimming garment having a support mechanism provided within the crotch and inner-thigh region, thereby enabling the wearer to present an aesthetically appealing, contoured and shaped inner-thigh region.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Clothing selections for individual wear are often based upon popularity of styles, fashions and comfort. Many times, however, popular looks are not conducive to comfortable wear by an average consumer. That is, some clothing styles seem to be designed specifically for tall, slender individuals, but fail to provide the often sought after media image when worn by an average person.

As a result, many individuals seek treatments, procedures, accessories and gadgets in quest of an altered and/or improved physical appearance. Women seem especially likely to pursue such a

goal. Medical treatments and procedures for shaping and/or reshaping one's body can be expensive and, as with most medical treatments, present risks that can have undesirable side effects. Alternatively, gadgets designed to assist in body shaping and 5 slenderizing can be effective, but often require strenuous and ongoing efforts for realization of results. It is not surprising, then, that many women, and men, choose to rely on accessories and garments to create body shaping illusions that enable the wear of popular styles and designs, as touted by models and celebrities 10 alike.

As a result, a wide variety of such body-shaping garments continue to be created. In addition to girdles, corsets and other traditional constricting undergarments, a typical department store, 15 for instance, now offers a plethora of body shaping stockings and slips. Each undergarment offers either minimization or enhancement of a targeted area or zone. In addition, outerwear such as leggings and dresses are sold, wherein the fabric is so tightly resilient that the wearer is "held" in place. Each such article or 20 device is purchased by a consumer in the hopes that she, or he, will be able to successfully manipulate a target area of the body to display a desirable fashion. Unfortunately, a successful look with such articles is often unattainable and/or unbearably

uncomfortable.

Even if a shaping undergarment enables the outward display of a glamorous illusion, getting out of such an undergarment is almost 5 never glamorous and can lead to embarrassing situations. For instance, while many individuals might wear a supportive undergarment to exhibit a certain look even if the garment were uncomfortable, the majority would not want to make the fact of such wear known. Thus, such an undergarment is disadvantageous for wear 10 by an individual whose subsequent disrobing may be in front of another, such as in an intimate setting, or perhaps in the company of peers in a locker room or other group-type arrangements.

Therefore, it is readily apparent that there is a need for 15 clothing having shape-enhancing features provided therein, thereby enabling a garment to be manufactured from essentially any fabric in a desirable and/or popular style, while also enabling concealed and targeted shape-enhancing properties, thereby avoiding the above-discussed disadvantages.

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BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Briefly described, in a preferred embodiment, the present

invention overcomes the above-mentioned disadvantages and meets the recognized need for such a device by providing thigh-slimming pants, wherein a preferably substantially concealed support mechanism is provided within the crotch and inner-thigh region 5 thereof, thereby enabling the wearer to present a natural, appealingly-contoured and shaped inner-thigh region, and wherein the need for purchase and wear of a separate shape-enhancing or minimizing undergarment is eliminated.

10 According to its major aspects and broadly stated, the present invention is a trouser, jean, Capri, jam (shorts), or other type of legwear garment, wherein style is maximized through the incorporation of a comfortable and essentially undetectable functional feature for visually minimizing the dimensions of the 15 inner-thigh, whereby the preferred resulting effect is the creation of a visible space, or open region, in the inner-thigh/crotch region between the upper legs of the wearer.

More specifically, the device of the present invention in its 20 preferred form is a jeans or pants-type device with a support mechanism provided therein to enable thigh-minimizing properties. The support mechanism, in its preferred form, is a plastic insert having a soft and flexible, yet strong and supportive construction.

The insert is shaped for placement in the crotch area of a pair of jeans, preferably constructed to receive and carry the insert within an internal pocket or receptacle therein. The insert is sufficiently thin to enable unobtrusive and comfortable wear, and

5 preferably possesses a generally U-shaped configuration to extend down into the thigh area of the wearer, thereby enabling the crotch and inner-thigh region of a wearer to be supported, and enabling the wearer to remove the jeans without revealing the shaping insert to an observer.

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A feature and advantage of the present invention is the ability of such a device to support and shape the inner thigh area within an article of clothing.

15 Another feature and advantage of the present invention is the ability of such a device to enable unobtrusive and comfortable wear.

Another feature and advantage of the present invention is the
20 ability of such a device to provide a body-shaping device in combination with a garment, wherein the garment can be fabricated of any material, fabric, leather, suede or the like.

Another feature and advantage of the present invention is the ability of such a device to provide a body-shaping device in combination with a garment, whereby removal of the garment by the wearer does not render the body-shaping device obvious to an
5 observer.

Another feature and advantage of the present invention is the ability of such a device to be comfortably and flexibly supportive.

10 Another feature and advantage of the present invention is the ability of such a device to enable the wearer to present an appealingly-contoured and shaped inner-thigh region.

15 Another feature and advantage of the present invention is the ability of such a device to enable shape-enhancing features to be incorporated into popular styles and fashions.

20 Another feature and advantage of the present invention is the ability of such a device to eliminate the need for purchase and wear of a separate shape-enhancing or minimizing undergarment.

Another feature and advantage of the present invention is the ability of such a device to maximize style by incorporating an

essentially undetectable functional feature for visually minimizing the dimensions of the inner-thigh.

Another feature and advantage of the present invention is the
5 ability of such a device to enable the wearer to create a visible space, or open region, in the inner-thigh/crotch region between the upper legs.

Another feature and advantage of the present invention is the
10 ability of such a device to support and contour the thigh region in a fashion similar to the support and contour of a breast by an underwire brassiere.

These and other objects, features and advantages of the
15 invention will become more apparent to one skilled in the art from the following description and claims when read in light of the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

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The present invention will be better understood by reading the Detailed Description of the Preferred and Alternate Embodiments with reference to the accompanying drawing figures, in which like

reference numerals denote similar structure and refer to like elements throughout, and in which:

FIG. 1 is a front, perspective view of a prior art garment.

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FIG. 2 is a front, perspective view of a thigh-slimming pants device according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention.

10 **FIG. 3** is a perspective view of a support member of the thigh-slimming pants device of **FIG. 2** according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED AND ALTERNATE EMBODIMENTS

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In describing the preferred and alternate embodiments of the present invention, as illustrated in the figures and/or described herein, specific terminology is employed for the sake of clarity. The invention, however, is not intended to be limited to the 20 specific terminology so selected, and it is to be understood that each specific element includes all technical equivalents that operate in a similar manner to accomplish similar functions.

Referring now to **FIG. 2**, the present invention in its preferred form is thigh-slimming garment 10 and method thereof (i.e., preferably marketed under the trademark GAPP), wherein garment 10 is preferably in the form of conventional ankle-length pants, and wherein support mechanism 20 is provided to be worn proximate to the crotch and inner-thigh regions of the wearer. Although garment 10 is preferably pants, it is contemplated in an alternate embodiment that garment 10 could be jams, or long shorts, Capri pants, jeans, or any other type of appropriately configured garment. Support mechanism 20 is preferably, generally U-shaped, wherein first generally elongated arm 30 and second generally elongated arm 50 extend proximate to the wearer's inner-thigh from base 70 proximate to the wearer's crotch area.

Referring now to **FIG. 3**, support mechanism 20 is formed from generally firm, yet somewhat flexible material capable of delivering a resistant pressure to the inner-thigh area, preferably with a silicon-coated wire frame 90 and fabric interior 92. The resistant pressure delivered by support mechanism 20 is preferably similar to that delivered by the underwire in a brassiere. One skilled in the art would readily recognize that, although silicon-coated wire is preferred for frame 90, other types of wire, wire-coatings, and/or generally firm yet flexible materials could be

utilized to form frame 90. Moreover, other types of interior materials could also be utilized in lieu of fabric interior 92, such as, for exemplary purposes only, plastic or any other appropriate synthetic or natural material.

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In the preferred form and use of thigh-slimming pants device 10 and method thereof, support mechanism 20 is positioned proximate to inner leg seam 100 of pants device 10, wherein fabric interior 92 is preferably sewn or stitched to inner leg seam 100. It is 10 recognized and anticipated that other means of attachment could be utilized without departing from the intended scope of the present invention such as, for exemplary purposes only, adhesives or heat-fusion. Moreover, support mechanism 20 could be positioned between a lining fabric and the outer fabric, especially for pants having 15 minimal or no inner-leg seams. It is also anticipated that in lieu of or in addition to fabric interior 92, frame 90 could be sewn or otherwise attached proximate to inner leg seam 100.

Referring now to **FIG. 1**, illustrated therein is a pair of 20 pants P representative of the prior art, wherein a wearer's inner-thigh region R can touch or rub, unflatteringly and/or uncomfortably. For the present, preferred invention, as shown in **FIG. 2**, the dimensions of first generally elongated arm 30 and

second generally elongated arm 50 preferably enable support mechanism 20 to extend at least a small distance, from the pubic area down the inner-thigh of the wearer, to enable the definition of a visible space or open region between the legs of the wearer,

5 wherein the width of first generally elongated arm 30 and second generally elongated arm 50 is preferably minimized for comfort. Thus, the inner-thigh regions R of the wearer are essentially prevented from substantially contacting one another. One skilled in the art should recognize that the width of the components of

10 support mechanism 20 could be varied, and could provide for extension at least partially around the leg of the wearer to further shape the leg beyond the inner-thigh region R. In the preferred embodiment, however, the dimensional width of elongated arms 30 and 50 is preferably the width that, relative to the size

15 of the pants and the individual wearer, enables achievement of the desired effect with maximum comfort and with virtual undetectability.

In an alternate embodiment, support mechanism 20 could be

20 formed and/or molded from plastic, wherein frame 90 and interior 92 could be integrally related.

In another alternate embodiment, support mechanism 20 could be

formed from any generally rigid, yet wearable, substrate or substrates, wherein support mechanism 20 could be affixed within a covering, or pocket-type arrangement, to inhibit direct contact with the leg of the wearer.

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In another alternate embodiment, support member 20 could be removably affixed proximate to inner seam 100, wherein support member 20 could be positioned with a pocket, or could be affixed by a fastening means such as, for exemplary purposes only, hook-and-
10 loop fasteners or snaps.

In another alternate embodiment, support member 20 could be manufactured for utilization in pre-existing pants, in lieu of the preferred thigh-slimming garment 10, wherein a fastening system
15 could be provided therewith to enable removable fastening thereto.

In another alternate embodiment, support member 20 could be generally V-shaped, or could be formed from two generally elongated support members, wherein each support member could be attached to
20 the inner-thigh region of a garment without being connected to each other.

In another alternate embodiment, support member 20 could be

formed from any number of generally elongated support arms, such that each inner-thigh region could be contoured with a grouping of two or three or more support members 20.

5 In another alternate embodiment, support member 20 could be formed and attached to, or removably utilized with, shorts, Capri pants, leggings, or with any other type of legwear wherein the gap spacing effect is a desirable illusion.

10 In use, the user purchases thigh-slimming pants device 10 with support member 20 provided therein. During wear of the pants, support member 20 exerts a generally inwardly-directed restrictive pressure along the inner-thigh, wherein such pressure effectively shapes and sculpts the inner-thigh region and essentially prevents 15 contact therebetween, thus defining an open area between the upper portion of the wearer's legs and creating the illusion of slimmer, leaner, sexier thigh. Upon removal of thigh-slimming pants device 10, support member 20 preferably remains intact therewith, thereby allowing the wearer to disrobe in front of another in an intimate 20 setting, or perhaps in the company of peers in a locker room or other group-type arrangement, without having to reveal the body-contouring nature of the garment.

Having thus described exemplary embodiments of the present invention, it should be noted by those skilled in the art that the within disclosures are exemplary only, and that various other alternatives, adaptations, and modifications may be made within the
5 scope of the present invention. Accordingly, the present invention is not limited to the specific embodiments illustrated herein, but is limited only by the following claims.